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INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY Colombia

DATE DISTR. 17 49

SUBJECT Liberal Proposal for Government by Junta

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SUPPLEMENT TO  
REPORT NO.

1. Dr. Dario Echandia, Liberal candidate for president of Colombia, has called for the postponement of the elections scheduled for 27 November 1949 and has proposed a plan for a government by a junta until such time as controls can be established to prevent violence and assure fair elections. Echandia's proposal, which has not been published in detail, contains the following points:
- The Liberal majority in congress would enter into an agreement with the Conservative minority, under the auspices of the President, to approve a revision to the Constitution postponing the presidential election indefinitely. This revision would be passed during the current session of congress and, as required by law, would be confirmed by a special session of congress to be called for that purpose in January 1950.
  - The Liberal majority would revoke both the Liberal-sponsored bill to advance the date of the presidential elections and also the nationalization of the cedula.
  - Under the proposed amendment, after the expiration of President Ospina Perez' term on 7 August 1950, Colombia would be governed by a bi-party group, consisting of two Liberals and two Conservatives, which would be chosen by the two houses of congress. Each member of this group would occupy the presidency for a period of six months, with the others serving as advisers.
  - The postponement of the election date would permit completion of registration in accordance with the recommendations of the Canadian commission and establishment of controls to assure peaceful and fair elections.
2. This proposal has been rejected by the Conservatives and Dr. Laureano Gomez is reported to have informed Echandia that the Liberal Party, having advanced the date for the presidential elections, would now have to accept the consequences.

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